



CLEP[®]

Official Study Guide

16th Edition

History of the United States I

College-Level Examination Program[®]

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History of the United States I

Description of the Examination

The History of the United States I: Early Colonization to 1877 examination covers material that is usually taught in the first semester of a two-semester course in United States history. The examination covers the period of United States history from early European colonizations to the end of Reconstruction, with the majority of the questions on the period of 1790-1877. In the part covering the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, emphasis is placed on the English colonies.

The examination contains 120 questions to be answered in 90 minutes. Some of these are pretest questions that will not be scored. Any time candidates spend on tutorials and providing personal information is in addition to the actual testing time.

Knowledge and Skills Required

Questions on the History of the United States I examination require candidates to demonstrate one or more of the following abilities:

- Identification and description of historical phenomena
- Analysis and interpretation of historical phenomena
- Comparison and contrast of historical phenomena

The subject matter of the History of the United States I examination is drawn from the following topics. The percentages next to the main topics indicate the approximate percentages of exam questions on those topics.

Topical Specifications

35%	Political institutions, political developments, behavior, and public policy
25%	Social developments
10%	Economic developments
15%	Cultural and intellectual developments
15%	Diplomacy and international relations

Chronological Specifications

30%	1500 – 1789
70%	1790–1877

The following are among the specific topics tested:

- The character of Colonial society
- British relations with the Atlantic colonies in North America
- The motivations and character of American expansionism
- The content of the Constitution and its amendments, and their interpretation by the Supreme Court
- The growth of political parties
- The changing role of government in American life
- The intellectual and political expressions of nationalism
- Agrarianism, abolitionism, and other such movements
- Long-term demographic trends
- The process of economic growth and development
- The origins and nature of Black slavery in America
- Immigration and the history of racial and ethnic minorities
- The causes and impacts of major wars in American history
- Major movements and individual figures in the history of American arts and letters
- Major movements and individual figures in the history of women and the family

Sample Test Questions

The following questions are provided to give an indication of the types of questions that appear on the History of the United States I examination. CLEP examinations are designed so that students of average ability completing a course in the subject can usually answer about half the questions correctly.

Directions: Each of the questions or incomplete statements below is followed by five suggested answers or completions. Select the one that is best in each case.

1. In a sermon given aboard ship on the way to America, John Winthrop told the Puritans that their society would be regarded as “a city upon a hill” and that therefore they should be bonded together by love. But first he explained that there would always be inequalities of wealth and power, that some people would always be in positions of authority while others would be dependent. His statements best illustrate the Puritans’
 - (A) reaction to unsuccessful socialist experiments in the Low Countries
 - (B) acceptance of the traditional belief that social order depended on a system of ranks
 - (C) intention to vest political power exclusively in the ministers
 - (D) desire to better themselves economically through means that included the institution of slavery
 - (E) inability to take clear stands on social issues
2. The French and Indian War led Great Britain to
 - (A) encourage colonial manufactures in its North American colonies
 - (B) impose revenue taxes on its North American colonies
 - (C) restrict emigration from England to North America
 - (D) ignore its North American colonies
 - (E) grant increased colonial self-government to its North American colonies
3. All of the following describe the colonial family in New England EXCEPT
 - (A) a hierarchical institution in which the father represented the source of authority
 - (B) a place that sheltered men from the workplace
 - (C) a social institution that cared for the needy and the poor
 - (D) a social institution that provided vocational training
 - (E) the basic farming unit
4. Which of the following is a correct statement about the use of slave labor in colonial Virginia?
 - (A) It was forced on reluctant White Virginians by profit-minded English merchants and the mercantilist officials of the Crown.
 - (B) It was the first time Europeans enslaved Black people.
 - (C) It fulfilled the original plans of the Virginia Company.
 - (D) It first occurred after the invention of Eli Whitney’s cotton gin, which greatly stimulated the demand for low-cost labor.
 - (E) It spread rapidly in the late seventeenth century, as Black slaves replaced White indentured servants in the tobacco fields.
5. Roger Williams defended liberty of conscience on the ground that
 - (A) all religions were equal in the eyes of the Creator
 - (B) the institutions of political democracy would be jeopardized without it
 - (C) Puritan ideas about sin and salvation were outmoded
 - (D) theological truths would emerge from the clash of ideas
 - (E) the state was an improper and ineffectual agency in matters of the spirit

6. Which of the following is true of White women in the British North American colonies?
- (A) They were allowed to be ordained as ministers.
 - (B) They were considered politically and socially equal to their husbands.
 - (C) They were eligible to work as teachers in public schools.
 - (D) They were eligible to run for political office.
 - (E) They were restricted in holding property and making legal contracts after marriage.
7. The Great Awakening in the American colonies in the mid-eighteenth century had all of the following consequences EXCEPT
- (A) separatism and secession from established churches, due to the democratizing effect of more accessible forms of piety
 - (B) the renewed persecution of people for witchcraft, because of the heightened interest in the supernatural
 - (C) the growth of institutions of higher learning to fill the need for more ministers to spread the gospel
 - (D) a flourishing of the missionary spirit as an outgrowth of more intensive religious devotion
 - (E) the lessening of doctrinal rigor and a concomitant appreciation for the more direct experiences of faith

Questions 8–9 refer to the following statement.

The present king of Great Britain . . . has combined with others to subject us to a jurisdiction foreign to our constitution, and unacknowledged by our laws.

8. The “constitution” referred to in the quotation above from the Declaration of Independence was
- (A) the principles common to all of the colonial charters
 - (B) the Articles of Confederation
 - (C) a constitution for the colonies written by Sir William Blackstone
 - (D) the laws passed concurrently by the several colonial legislatures
 - (E) the principles the colonists believed had traditionally regulated English government
9. The protest that the king had “combined with others to subject us to a jurisdiction foreign to our constitution” referred to George III’s
- (A) alliance with the king of France
 - (B) use of Hessian mercenaries
 - (C) reliance on his representatives in the colonies
 - (D) approval of parliamentary laws impinging on colonial self-government
 - (E) intention to place a German prince on the throne of British America

10. By the time of the Revolution, many American colonists had generally come to believe that the creation of a republic would solve the problems of monarchical rule because a republic would establish
- (A) a highly centralized government led by a social elite
 - (B) a strong chief executive
 - (C) a small, limited government responsible to the people
 - (D) unlimited male suffrage
 - (E) a society in which there were no differences of rank and status
11. All state constitutions drafted during the American Revolutionary era were significant because they
- (A) were based on the principle of virtual representation
 - (B) included clauses that immediately emancipated slaves
 - (C) provided for the confiscation and redistribution of the property of wealthy Loyalists
 - (D) reinforced the principle of a written frame of government
 - (E) introduced the concept of checks and balances
12. *Letters from a Farmer in Pennsylvania* was written to
- (A) record the soil, climate, and profitable crops in the Pennsylvania colony
 - (B) chronicle the history of William Penn's colonization efforts
 - (C) argue against the power of Parliament to tax the American colonies' internal trade
 - (D) petition King George III for colonial representation in Parliament
 - (E) encourage colonization of the western frontier
13. Under the Articles of Confederation, which of the following was true about the national government?
- (A) It had the power to conduct foreign affairs.
 - (B) It had the power to regulate commerce.
 - (C) It had the power to levy taxes.
 - (D) It included the office of a President.
 - (E) It included a federal judiciary.
14. The concept that the ultimate sovereignty of the federal government rests with the people is most explicitly stated in
- (A) the Preamble to the United States Constitution
 - (B) *Common Sense*
 - (C) the Fourteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution
 - (D) the Bill of Rights
 - (E) the Articles of Confederation
15. "There is an opinion that parties in free countries are useful checks upon the administration of the government and serve to keep alive the spirit of liberty. This within certain limits is probably true, and in governments of a monarchical cast patriotism may look with indulgence, if not with favor, upon the spirit of party. But in those of the popular character, in governments purely elective, it is a spirit not to be encouraged."
- The passage above is from a speech by which of the following presidents?
- (A) George Washington
 - (B) Thomas Jefferson
 - (C) James Madison
 - (D) Andrew Jackson
 - (E) Abraham Lincoln

16. Thomas Jefferson opposed some of Alexander Hamilton's programs because Jefferson believed that
- (A) the common bond of a substantial national debt would serve to unify the different states
 - (B) the French alliance threatened to spread the violence of the French Revolution to America
 - (C) the federal government should encourage manufacturing and industry
 - (D) Hamilton's programs were weakening the military strength of the nation
 - (E) Hamilton's programs favored manufacturing and commercial interests
17. The Embargo Act of 1807 had which of the following effects on the United States?
- (A) It severely damaged American manufacturing.
 - (B) It enriched many cotton plantation owners.
 - (C) It severely damaged American shipping.
 - (D) It was ruinous to subsistence farmers.
 - (E) It had little economic impact.
18. Henry Clay's "American System" was a plan to
- (A) compromise on the issue of extending slavery to new United States territories
 - (B) foster the economic integration of the North, the West, and the South
 - (C) export United States political and economic values to oppressed peoples
 - (D) maintain United States noninvolvement in the internal affairs of Europe
 - (E) assert the right of states to nullify decisions of the national government
19. Deists of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries believed that
- (A) natural laws, designed by the Creator, govern the operation of the universe
 - (B) prayer has the power to make significant changes in a person's life
 - (C) the idea of God is merely the creation of people's minds
 - (D) the universe was created by a natural, spontaneous combining of elements
 - (E) intuition rather than reason leads people to an awareness of the divine
20. The Louisiana Purchase was significant because it
- (A) eliminated Spain from the North American continent
 - (B) gave the United States control of the Mississippi River
 - (C) eased tensions between Western settlers and Native Americans
 - (D) forced the British to evacuate their posts in the Northwest
 - (E) reduced sectional conflict over the slavery issue

21. Between the Monroe Doctrine (1823) and the outbreak of the Civil War (1861), the most important aspect of United States foreign policy was
- (A) securing access to Canadian fisheries
 - (B) reopening the British West Indies to direct trade with the United States
 - (C) securing international recognition
 - (D) expanding the nation's boundaries
 - (E) responding to Cuban independence
22. Jacksonian banking policies did which of the following?
- (A) Removed banking issues from national politics.
 - (B) Stalled the westward movement.
 - (C) Ended foreign investment in the United States.
 - (D) Abolished state banks.
 - (E) Encouraged the expansion of credit and speculation.
23. Which of the following is true of John C. Calhoun?
- (A) He was an ardent nationalist whose inflammatory speeches stirred emotional outburst and fighting on the Senate floor.
 - (B) He supported the doctrine of nullification, which declared the right of states to rule on the constitutionality of federal law.
 - (C) He became a strong opponent of southern nationalism and sought federal legislation to link the West and the South.
 - (D) As vice president of the United States, he helped formulate the beginnings of a new Republican Party.
 - (E) He led a successful movement to include the right of concurrent majority in the Constitution of the United States.
24. Which of the following had the greatest impact on the institution of slavery in the United States in the first quarter of the nineteenth century?
- (A) Demands of Southern textile manufacturers for cotton
 - (B) Introduction of crop rotation and fertilizers
 - (C) The abolition of indentured servitude
 - (D) Invention of the cotton gin
 - (E) The Three-Fifths Compromise
25. The "putting out system" that emerged in antebellum America refers to the
- (A) organizing of slave labor into efficient planting teams
 - (B) production of finished goods in individual households
 - (C) sending of poor children to live on farms in the Midwest
 - (D) shipping of raw materials to European factories
 - (E) forced migration of Native Americans from valuable lands
26. Which of the following was a major focus of antebellum reform?
- (A) Income tax law
 - (B) Universal suffrage
 - (C) Prison reform
 - (D) Creation of national parks
 - (E) Machine politics

27. The establishment of Brook Farm and the Oneida Community in the antebellum United States reflected
- (A) the influence of Social Darwinism on American thinkers
 - (B) the continued impact of Calvinist ideas on American thought
 - (C) a belief in perfectionism
 - (D) attempts to foster racial integration
 - (E) the implementation of all-female utopian communities
28. During the early stages of manufacturing, the textile mills in Lowell, Massachusetts, primarily employed
- (A) native-born, single White men who had lost their farms
 - (B) native-born, single White women from rural areas
 - (C) White males from debtors' prisons
 - (D) recent immigrants from southern and eastern Europe
 - (E) African American women
29. Members of the Whig Party organized in the 1830's agreed most on which of the following?
- (A) Extension of slavery into western territories
 - (B) Elimination of protective tariffs
 - (C) Endorsement of the doctrine of nullification
 - (D) Disapproval of Andrew Jackson's policies
 - (E) Disapproval of the "corrupt bargain" under John Quincy Adams
30. The issue of constitutionality figured most prominently in the consideration of which of the following?
- (A) Tariff of 1789
 - (B) First Bank of the United States
 - (C) Funding of the national debt
 - (D) Assumption of state debts
 - (E) Excise tax on whiskey
31. The presidential election of 1840 is often considered the first "modern" election because
- (A) the slavery issue was first raised in this campaign
 - (B) it was the first election in which women voted
 - (C) voting patterns were similar to those later established in the 1890's
 - (D) both parties for the first time widely campaigned among all the eligible voters
 - (E) a second "era of good feeling" had just come to a close, marking a new departure in politics
32. The idea of Manifest Destiny included all of the following EXCEPT the belief that
- (A) commerce and industry would decline as the nation expanded its agricultural base
 - (B) the use of land for settled agriculture was preferable to its use for nomadic hunting
 - (C) westward expansion was both inevitable and beneficial
 - (D) the Creator selected America as a chosen land populated by a chosen people
 - (E) the ultimate extent of the American domain was to be from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean

33. "Upon these considerations, it is the opinion of the court that the act of Congress which prohibited a citizen from holding and owning property of this kind in the territory of the United States north of the line therein mentioned, is not warranted by the Constitution, and is therefore void; and that neither the plaintiff himself, nor any of his family, were made free by being carried into this territory; even if they had been carried there by the owner, who intended to become a permanent resident."

The congressional act referred to in the passage was the

- (A) Kansas-Nebraska Act
 - (B) Missouri Compromise
 - (C) Northwest Ordinance
 - (D) Compromise of 1850
 - (E) Fugitive Slave Act
34. *Moby-Dick*, *The Scarlet Letter*, and *Leaves of Grass* are examples of which of the following movements in American Literature?
- (A) American Renaissance
 - (B) Harlem Renaissance
 - (C) Realism
 - (D) Modernism
 - (E) Genteel Tradition
35. Which of the following represents William Lloyd Garrison's attitude toward slavery?
- (A) Immediate emancipation and resettlement in Liberia
 - (B) Immediate emancipation and resettlement in the Southwest
 - (C) Immediate emancipation with compensation for owners
 - (D) Gradual emancipation without compensation for owners
 - (E) Immediate emancipation without compensation for owners



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36. The drawing above illustrates the nineteenth-century middle-class view of the
- (A) home as a refuge from the world rather than as a productive unit
 - (B) declining influence of women in the family structure
 - (C) economic value of children to families
 - (D) importance of religious education
 - (E) widening role of women in society
37. Which of the following groups was most likely to adopt the Free-Soil ideology?
- (A) Free Blacks
 - (B) Northern capitalists
 - (C) Western frontier settlers
 - (D) Southern yeomen farmers
 - (E) Southern plantation owners
38. The 1848 women's rights convention in Seneca Falls, New York, was a protest against
- (A) the use of women workers in textile factories
 - (B) the abuse of female slaves on Southern plantations
 - (C) the failure of the Democratic Party to endorse a woman suffrage amendment
 - (D) customs and laws that gave women a status inferior to that of men
 - (E) state restrictions that prevented women from joining labor unions

39. Which of the following wrote *Uncle Tom's Cabin*?
- (A) Louisa May Alcott
 - (B) Herman Melville
 - (C) Harriet Beecher Stowe
 - (D) Richard Henry Dana
 - (E) Kate Chopin
40. Which of the following was opposed by both the Free-Soil Party and the Republican Party in the mid-nineteenth century?
- (A) Internal improvement in the West
 - (B) Extension of slavery into the territories
 - (C) Growth of textile manufacturing in New England
 - (D) Unrestricted immigration from Ireland
 - (E) The use of paper money
41. In the pre-Civil War era, the railroad's most important impact on the economy was that it
- (A) created a huge new market for railway equipment
 - (B) created the basis for greater cooperation between Southern planters and Northern textile manufacturers
 - (C) generated new employment opportunities for unskilled urban workers
 - (D) involved the federal government in the financing of a nationwide transportation network
 - (E) provided Midwestern farmers accessibility to Eastern urban markets
42. Which of the following was NOT an element of the Compromise of 1850?
- (A) A stronger fugitive slave law
 - (B) Abolition of the slave trade in Washington, D.C.
 - (C) Admittance of California as a free state
 - (D) Organization of the Kansas Territory without slavery
 - (E) Adjustment of the Texas-New Mexico boundary
43. All of the following conditions influenced the development of American agriculture during the first half of the nineteenth century EXCEPT
- (A) Settlement of the western territories
 - (B) a widespread interest in conserving soil and natural resources
 - (C) the trend toward regional economic specialization
 - (D) the enthusiasm for land speculation
 - (E) improvements in transportation by water
44. Which of the following best describes the United States position in the world economy during the period 1790–1860?
- (A) It was the leading producer of finished and manufactured goods for export.
 - (B) It relied heavily on European capital for its economic expansion.
 - (C) It had an inadequate merchant marine and depended largely on foreign vessels to carry its trade.
 - (D) It was strengthened by the acquisition of overseas colonies.
 - (E) It was severely hampered by its reliance on slave labor.

Questions 45–46 refer to the following cartoon.



45. According to the cartoon, allowing the Southern states to leave the Union would cause

- (A) the North to be threatened by internal dissension
- (B) the Democratic Party to collapse
- (C) the Southern states to be dominated by European powers
- (D) the Confederacy to expand into Latin America
- (E) President Buchanan to be impeached and removed from office

46. The best evidence to support the cartoonist's contention that Old Hickory (Jackson) would have acted to stop secession was Jackson's earlier reaction to the

- (A) election of John Quincy Adams to the presidency
- (B) Spanish and American Indian border attacks on Florida
- (C) South Carolina Nullification Ordinance
- (D) requests for annexation of Texas
- (E) Maysville Turnpike Bill

47. At the end of the Civil War, the majority of freed slaves found work in the South as

- (A) factory workers
- (B) railroad employees
- (C) independent craftsmen
- (D) tenant farmers
- (E) domestic servants

48. Abraham Lincoln's plan for Reconstruction included which of the following?

- (A) Establishment of five military districts to prepare seceded regions for readmission as states
- (B) Punishment of Confederates through land confiscation and high property taxes
- (C) Restoration of property to White Southerners who would swear a loyalty oath to the United States
- (D) Reestablishment of state government after 10 percent of the voters in a state pledged their allegiance to the United States
- (E) Readmission of states to the Union contingent on their ratification of the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments to the Constitution

49. All of the following elements of the Radical Republican program were implemented during Reconstruction EXCEPT

- (A) provision of 40 acres to each freedman
- (B) enactment of the Fourteenth Amendment
- (C) military occupation of the South
- (D) punishment of the Confederate leaders
- (E) restrictions on the power of the President

50. Andrew Johnson's Reconstruction plan allowed for southern states to be readmitted into the Union on the condition that they
- (A) revoke the ordinance of secession and ratify the Thirteenth Amendment
 - (B) prohibit the use of the Black Codes
 - (C) guarantee suffrage for all citizens, regardless of race
 - (D) give land grants to emancipated slaves
 - (E) punish ex-Confederates refusing the oath of loyalty to the United States
51. Which of the following was a renowned Black poet in New England in the late eighteenth century?
- (A) Benjamin Banneker
 - (B) Lemuel Haynes
 - (C) Phillis Wheatley
 - (D) Gabriel Prosser
 - (E) Sojourner Truth
52. During the antebellum period, the Auburn System was designed to
- (A) teach factory workers proper work habits
 - (B) instill discipline in grade schools
 - (C) reform criminals through solitary confinement
 - (D) punish runaway slaves
 - (E) cure the mentally ill
53. California was admitted to the Union
- (A) as part of the Compromise of 1850
 - (B) with the passage of the Wilmot proviso
 - (C) during the Mexican War
 - (D) with the passage of the Northwest Ordinance
 - (E) when the Kansas-Nebraska Act settled the issue of western slavery
54. Which of the following wrote *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*?
- (A) Frances Ellen Watkins Harper
 - (B) Sojourner Truth
 - (C) Lydia Maria Child
 - (D) Harriet Beecher Stowe
 - (E) Harriet Jacobs
55. The activities of the Freedman's Bureau included all of the following EXCEPT
- (A) providing food, clothing, medical care, and shelter to war victims
 - (B) reuniting families of freedmen
 - (C) establishing a network of courts
 - (D) establishing schools for freed slaves
 - (E) redistributing land
56. The United States completed the Gadsden Purchase in 1853 in order to
- (A) obtain Oregon
 - (B) build a transcontinental railroad
 - (C) relieve population pressures
 - (D) obtain additional grazing lands
 - (E) balance slave and free states
57. Place the following events in the correct chronological order. Place the earliest event first.
- Old Deluder Satan Act
 - Establishment of grade schools
 - Establishment of normal schools
 - Northwest Ordinance
-
-
-
-

Click on a choice, then click on a box.

Study Resources

Most textbooks used in college-level United States history courses cover the topics in the outline given earlier, but the approaches to certain topics and the emphasis given to them may differ. To prepare for the History of the United States I exam, it is advisable to study one or more college textbooks, which can be found in most college bookstores. When selecting a textbook, check the table of contents against the “Knowledge and Skills Required” for this test.

Additional detail and differing interpretations can be gained by consulting readers and specialized historical studies. Pay attention to visual materials (pictures, maps, and charts) as you study. The Internet is another resource you could explore.

Additional suggestions for preparing for CLEP exams are given in “Preparing to Take CLEP Examinations.”

Answer Key

- | | | | |
|-----|---|-----|---------|
| 1. | B | 30. | B |
| 2. | B | 31. | D |
| 3. | B | 32. | A |
| 4. | E | 33. | B |
| 5. | E | 34. | A |
| 6. | E | 35. | E |
| 7. | B | 36. | A |
| 8. | E | 37. | C |
| 9. | D | 38. | D |
| 10. | C | 39. | C |
| 11. | D | 40. | B |
| 12. | C | 41. | E |
| 13. | A | 42. | D |
| 14. | A | 43. | B |
| 15. | A | 44. | B |
| 16. | E | 45. | C |
| 17. | C | 46. | C |
| 18. | B | 47. | D |
| 19. | A | 48. | D |
| 20. | B | 49. | A |
| 21. | D | 50. | A |
| 22. | E | 51. | C |
| 23. | B | 52. | C |
| 24. | D | 53. | A |
| 25. | B | 54. | E |
| 26. | C | 55. | E |
| 27. | C | 56. | B |
| 28. | B | 57. | 1,4,2,3 |
| 29. | D | | |